

1 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
2 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI
3
4 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
5)
6 Plaintiff,) CASE NO. 1:15CR98
7)
8 vs.)
9)
10 MUHAMMAD ODA DAKHLALLA,)
11)
12 Defendant.)
13

14 EXCERPT OF SENTENCING AS TO COUNT 1 OF THE INDICTMENT
15 BEFORE CHIEF DISTRICT JUDGE SHARION AYCOCK
16 WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2016
17 OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI

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27 produced by computer.

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1 (BEGINNING OF EXCERPT)

2 THE DEFENDANT: First and foremost, I'd like to
3 acknowledge the charges that have been placed on me. I do
4 accept that responsibility of sending those messages, and I
5 regretfully -- excuse me -- I regretfully wish that I never had
6 done it in the first place.

7 Secondly -- hang on a second. I wanted to mention what my
8 mindset was before the arrest and after the arrest, Your Honor.

9 THE COURT: Yes, sir.

10 THE DEFENDANT: Before the arrest, our family wasn't
11 really much of a TV family. We did have a TV; but we would use
12 it, you know, for movies and things like that. We weren't
13 really watching the news or anything like that. So a lot of my
14 information that I got was through the internet.

15 And, you know -- but the internet's a lot of, you know,
16 open source, you know. Anybody can say whatever, really. So
17 that's where I got a lot of my information from. As far as
18 these videos that I'd seen before my arrest, you know, I had
19 thought, when I looked through these, that , you know -- I was
20 like, oh, you know, look, these look like good people.

21 And I referred to the ISIS and the people there. You
22 know, I looked at these people are good, and they're helping
23 out people and even what looks like the Syrian citizens, you
24 know. They're speaking highly of them like they're heroes or
25 something like that.

1 And, so, that was part of it in my head. And another part
2 was kind of feeling in the depressed state, sort of powerless
3 in a way. I couldn't feel like I could take, you know, the
4 responsibilities that I had at my home at that time.

5 And, after my arrest, you know, the time spent in jail,
6 you know, the TV was all available to me. And, you know, I had
7 seen things on news, you know, all the violences that have been
8 caused in the Middle East, Europe, and even here on American
9 soil.

10 When I looked at that, I saw -- I was like, wait a minute;
11 this isn't what I saw from those videos, you know. And, from
12 the Islamic perspective, I was like no; they couldn't have just
13 randomly decided to kill innocent people like this. This isn't
14 allowed in Islam.

15 And then the next big alarm that shocked me even more was
16 the big news on the Syrian migration to Europe and the United
17 States. And I thought to myself, wow, I've got this completely
18 mixed up. I was completely wrong about what I have thought
19 about what ISIS was, you know.

20 You know, when I now come to the conclusion, you know,
21 they're really sick and twisted. You know, they twist Islam
22 for their own agenda, own political agenda. So that --
23 that's -- you know, now my mental state now, you know. I
24 denounce them. I condemn them. You know, I don't appreciate
25 anything that they do at all.

1 My third point is that the day before my arrest I had
2 basically lied to my mother that I'd be going on vacation with
3 my ex and -- excuse me. (Pause). And it was the last time I
4 ever got to hold her. Now that she's passed away, I regret
5 ever lying to her like that. She didn't deserve it. She was
6 always in full support of whatever I did. I'm sorry, Your
7 Honor.

8 The fourth thing I -- I do realize, you know, throughout
9 the months being in jail, that the FBI -- they really saved my
10 life, Your Honor. I was about to do something really reckless
11 and stupid and more than -- you know, even if I was successful
12 in getting over there, I'd have probably been dead by now, Your
13 Honor.

14 And, so, I personally want to thank the FBI, especially
15 Mr. Steve Thomason and his crew for taking me and arresting me.
16 Because they really did truly save my life. I'm eternally
17 grateful for that.

18 And, lastly, I -- you know, now that I've seen, you know,
19 the biggest mistake of my life -- and I feel that I betrayed my
20 own country by committing this crime; and I wanted to really do
21 anything that I can to spread the message, educate people about
22 how twisted and savage this group of ISIS really is.

23 And I'm willing to speak in all sorts of media outlets
24 that I'm given the opportunity to, if possible, Your Honor.

25 Thank you for your patience and time, Your Honor.
 (END OF EXCERPT)

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CERTIFICATE OF OFFICIAL REPORTER

I, Rita Davis Young, Federal Official Realtime Court Reporter, in and for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi, do hereby certify that pursuant to Section 753, Title 28, United States Code that the foregoing is a true and correct EXCERPT of the transcript of the stenographically reported proceedings held in the above-entitled matter; and that the transcript page format is in conformance with the regulations of the Judicial Conference of the United States.

Dated this 2nd day of September, 2016.

/s/ Rita Davis Young
RITA DAVIS YOUNG, FCRR, RPR, CSR #1626
Federal Official Court Reporter